



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

SHIPPING DEPUTY MINISTRY TO THE PRESIDENT

Circular No. 03/2020

SDM File No. 5.13.09

03 February 2020

To all Registered owners, Registered bareboat charterers,
Managers and Representatives of ships flying the Cyprus Flag

Subject: Novel Coronavirus- Precautions to be taken to minimise risks to seafarers, passengers and others on board ships

I refer to the above subject and I wish to inform you of the issuing of Circular Letter No.4204 dated 31 January 2020 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) providing information and guidance on the precautions to be taken to minimise risks to seafarers, passengers and others on board ships from novel coronavirus. It is noted that on 30 January 2020, the WHO declared that the outbreak of novel coronavirus constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

2. The aforementioned IMO Circular Letter No. 4204 is based on recommendations developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and it contains the symptoms of the novel coronavirus, the WHO's advice on key preventative measures as well as a non-exhaustive list of links providing advice and guidance to seafarers and shipping. Copy of said IMO Circular Letter is attached to this Circular. Specific advice to shipping crew and companies has been given by the International Maritime Health Association. Copy of said advice is also attached hereto.

3. All owners and managers of ships flying the Cyprus Flag are **strongly urged** to promulgate information on the basis of IMO Circular Letter No. 4204 to ensure that seafarers, passengers and others on board ships are provided with accurate and relevant information on the coronavirus outbreak and on the measures to reduce the risk of exposure if they are likely to be engaged on ships trading to and from ports in coronavirus-affected States.

Costas Iacovou

Permanent Secretary

Shipping Deputy Ministry to the President

Cc.

- Maritime Offices of the Shipping Deputy Ministry to the President abroad
- General Manager, Cyprus Ports Authorities
- Recognised Organisations (ROs)
- Cyprus Shipping Chamber
- Cyprus Union of Shipowners
- Cyprus Shipping Association
- Cyprus Bar Association



4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT
LONDON SE1 7SR
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

Circular Letter No.4204
31 January 2020

To: All IMO Member States
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)**

Introduction

1 The purpose of this circular is to provide information and guidance, based on recommendations developed by the World Health Organization (WHO), on the precautions to be taken to minimize risks to seafarers, passengers and others on board ships from novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).*

Background

2 On 31 December 2019, WHO was alerted to several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. Subsequently, on 7 January 2020, Chinese authorities confirmed that they had identified a new virus in the coronavirus family of viruses, which includes the common cold and viruses such as SARS and MERS. This new virus was temporarily named "2019-nCoV".

3 WHO has been working with the Chinese authorities, governments and global experts to rapidly expand scientific knowledge on the new virus, track its spread and virulence, and provide advice on measures to protect health and prevent the spread of this outbreak.

4 As of 29 January 2020, a total of 130 tests have been concluded in the United Kingdom, all of which were confirmed negative. The latest information regarding the situation in the United Kingdom can be obtained at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

5 On 30 January 2020, WHO declared that the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

* For information and guidance on precautions for delegates attending IMO meetings, please refer to Circular Letter No.4203.

Symptoms

6 Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death. Infection from humans to humans may occur during the incubation period (before persons show signs of sickness). Coronavirus can cause more severe symptoms in people with weakened immune systems, older people, and those with long-term conditions like diabetes, cancer and chronic lung disease.

Risks

7 The current outbreak originated in Wuhan City, which is a major domestic and international transport hub. Given the large population movements and the observed human-to-human transmission, it is not unexpected that new confirmed cases will continue to appear in other areas and countries.

WHO advice

8 It is prudent to remind populations and health workers of the basic principles to reduce the general risk of transmission of acute respiratory infections by following the below-mentioned key preventative measures:

- .1 avoiding close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections;
- .2 frequent handwashing, especially after direct contact with ill people or their environment;
- .3 avoiding unprotected contact with farm or wild animals;
- .4 people with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should practise cough etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and wash hands); and
- .5 within healthcare facilities, enhance standard infection prevention and control practices in hospitals, especially in emergency departments.

9 WHO does not recommend any specific health measures for travellers. In case of symptoms suggestive of acute respiratory illness either during or after travel, travellers are encouraged to seek medical attention and share their travel history with their healthcare provider. Health authorities should work with travel, transport and tourism sectors to provide travellers with information to reduce the general risk of acute respiratory infections via travel health clinics, travel agencies, conveyance operators and at points of entry.

10 Travellers who had contact with confirmed cases or direct exposure to a potential source of infection should be placed under medical observation. High-risk contacts should avoid travel for the duration of the incubation period (up to 14 days).

11 Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) advice for the public published on the WHO website contains WHO standard recommendations for the general public to reduce exposure to and transmission of a range of illnesses, to protect yourself and others from getting sick, and to stay healthy while travelling. WHO provides novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) travel advice here:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/travel-advice>

12 With the information currently available for the novel coronavirus, WHO advises that measures to limit the risk of exportation or importation of the disease should be implemented, without unnecessary restrictions on international traffic.

13 Member States are advised to urge all stakeholders (companies, managers, crewing agents, etc.) to promulgate information to ensure that seafarers, passengers and others on board ships are provided with accurate and relevant information on the coronavirus outbreak and on the measures to reduce the risk of exposure if they are likely to be engaged on ships trading to and from ports in coronavirus-affected States.

Guidance available

14 The following links provide advice and guidance to seafarers and shipping (non-exhaustive list):

[International Maritime Health Association](#) (IMHA) advice for shipping companies on the new type of coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

[USCG Novel Coronavirus Precautions](#)

15 WHO issues advice on international travel and health. This information is regularly reviewed and updated by WHO and can be found at the following address:

www.who.int/ith/updates

Additional information can also be found at:

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1056031>

https://www.who.int/ith/other_health_risks/en/

16 The publications listed below may also be helpful:

WHO International Health Regulations

WHO Guide to ship sanitation

International Medical Guide for Ships



Reducing the Risk of Infection from 2019 new Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) Information to shipping companies (26.1.2020)

A new type of Coronavirus was detected since December 2019 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China. All cases in Wuhan were connected to the “Huanan Seafood Market”. The source of infection is unclear. Human-to-human transmission is possible.

Signs and symptoms of 2019- nCoV sickness

- **Fever**
- **Acute respiratory symptoms (cough, breathing problems, pneumonia)**
- **Average time from infection to disease: 7 days**
- **Infection from humans- to-humans may occur during incubation period (before persons shows signs of sickness)**



Cases have been exported from Wuhan to other Chinese provinces and to Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Macau, Hong Kong, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, USA, France and Australia. Further global spread to other countries is possible.

The Chinese authorities have installed TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS in the affected areas in China. Health measures, such as fever measurements are installed at Chinese airports, bus and train stations and at ports.

Currently WHO does not recommend travel restrictions. Follow up what local authorities recommend and stay up to date on the latest advice from WHO.

IMHA Office

Italiëlei 51 - B-2000 Antwerp - Belgium

Tel +32 3 229 07 76 - Fax +32 3 225 20 38 - E-mail imha@online.be - www.imha.net

Accountnr. 416-6104001-76 – IBAN BE91 4166 1040 0176 – BIC KRED BE BB

IMHA is registered in Belgium as an international association by Royal Decree of 14/07/1998, identification number: 22285/98



How to protect yourself from getting infected with 2019-nCoV



- Frequently clean hands by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- When coughing and sneezing cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue – throw tissue away immediately and wash hands;
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has fever and cough;
- If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing seek medical care early and share previous travel history with your health care provider;
- When visiting live markets in areas currently experiencing cases of novel coronavirus, avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals;
- The consumption of raw or undercooked animal products should be avoided. Raw meat, milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods, as per good food safety practices.

Specific advice to shipping crew and companies (as of January 26, 2020)

- Do not restrict embarkation /disembarkation of seafarers in non-affected ports
- Do not restrict necessary ship visits by port agents, chaplains, service personnel and others.
- Do not visit Food Markets in China. Avoid provision of fish and poultry in China.
- Do not consume raw eggs, milk, meat.
- For galley: Observe strict food hygiene to avoid cross contamination
- Store facial protection for all crew (5 pieces /per person)
- Provide influenza vaccination, alcohol based hand rub and facial protection to ship inspector and other company employees who travel to China.
- If a person on board falls sick AND has been travelling to affected areas 2-12 days before embarkation, the person must stay in his cabin. Consult a Medical Doctor in the next port.
- If a sick person is on board of the ship, fill the Maritime declaration of health and notify port authority
- Further information: www.who.int

IMHA Office

Italiëlei 51 - B-2000 Antwerp - Belgium

Tel +32 3 229 07 76 - Fax +32 3 225 20 38 - E-mail imha@online.be - www.imha.net

Accountnr. 416-6104001-76 – IBAN BE91 4166 1040 0176 – BIC KRED BE BB

IMHA is registered in Belgium as an international association by Royal Decree of 14/07/1998, identification number: 22285/98